

TOP THREATS

to Missouri Investors in 2011



- 1 Fraud Targeting Social Groups.**

Con artists work through churches, senior centers and social networking websites to find new victims and gain their trust. Known as "affinity fraud," these schemes have cost Missourians more than \$11 million.
- 2 Loans Backed by Promissory Notes.**

These private loans may be especially risky or nothing more than a scam. If someone offers you a promissory note in return for your money, call our office. We can help you determine if it is a legitimate investment.
- 3 Variable and Equity Indexed Annuities.**

These complicated investments are not right for everyone, especially seniors, and may require high surrender fees to access your savings. In the past year, our office recovered more than \$1.6 million from unsuitable annuity sales.
- 4 Gold, Silver and Foreign Currency.**

Precious metals are pitched as a safe alternative to the stock market, but they can be just as risky. Even worse, scam artists are using bogus gold or silver offerings to attract investors.
- 5 Free Lunch or Dinner Seminars.**

Investment seminars may use a free lunch or dinner to attract seniors. Unfortunately, the free meal often comes with bad advice that can put your savings at risk.

To learn more, call the Investor Protection Hotline

(800) 721-7996

or visit MissouriInvestorProtection.gov

SECRETARY OF STATE ROBIN CARNAHAN

HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOUR SAVINGS?

In recent years, we've helped Missourians recover more than **\$2 billion in savings** and cracked down on scams, bad investment advice and financial fraud. These simple steps can help protect your savings.

Call to Check

Every time you consider a new investment or a new broker, or if you have concerns that your money is being mishandled, call the Investor Protection Hotline. It just takes a minute and it's the best way to protect your savings.

Get It on Paper

Make sure you receive complete documents that contain all the fees, costs and charges before you invest. Tell anyone offering you an investment that you want a prospectus and, if real estate is involved, proof of ownership.

Understand Your Goals

Before deciding on an investment, determine when you may need to access your money, how much risk you can tolerate, and what taxes and fees you will have to pay. Then, make sure that your financial advisor understands your goals.



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